

June 9, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: AIS Observers

FROM: David C. Potter
Branch Chief, FSB

SUBJECT: CAS Sampling Protocol Changes
(Sea Scallop Area Access Program)

This memo is to inform you of changes to the Closed Area Scallop (CAS) sampling protocols effective July 1, 2004. These changes are necessary due to an increased need to monitor bycatch as well as to reduce confusion in biological sampling protocols between CAS trips and non-CAS sea scallop trips. All observers deployed to scallop vessels fishing in the closed areas will now follow the same biological sampling protocols of standard sea scallop trips. These protocols are described in the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program Biological Sampling Manual on pages 16 and 17. Please refer to your Biological Sampling Manual for more detail but the major changes are as follows:

- increase biological sampling frequency to a minimum of every other observed haul.
- at least one haul of every watch finfish sampling is first priority.
- finfish to be sampled increased to monkfish, summer flounder, yellowtail flounder and flounder, nk.

One major protocol difference will remain between the two fisheries. This is that you will continue obtaining dressed (meat) weights on CAS and round (in the shell) weights on standard scallop trips. The Haul Log fields, total scallop pounds and kept average lb/bushel must continue to follow this protocol. Please be aware that violating this weight type protocol seriously affects the accuracy of the data. With this now being the only difference between the two trip types, it is hoped that scallop weights will no longer be a source of error.